

Newport Outdoor Group (YHA)



THE WHITE PEAK WAY

May 14th to 22nd 2011

by Norman Roberts



Editors

Mike Alder-Woolf
& Nick Meyrick

Web Site

<http://walk.to/nogs>

“Before booking in at the hostel, an early meal was taken by Dave, Lorna, Kevin, Jackie, and Norman in the Charles Cotton Hotel, where time was taken in search of 'The Naked Lady' - a hidden portrayal within the mural painted just 3 months ago around the wall of the restaurant.”

**Get
The
Outdoor
Habit!**

The WPW is a challenging 90+ mile walk which offers both places of interest and variety of landscape. The route is NOT way-marked, so map reading skills are paramount. The weather for the week was generally very good, and temperatures were ideal for long distance walking. I wore my cagoule only on two occasions, including the first day which was damp and chilly early on. Kevin kept everybody supplied with sweets on a daily basis, and even the Derbyshire donkeys appreciated them. It was the first time that Lorna, Kevin, and Mary had completed an LDP with the NOGs. Kevin, Jackie, and Norman carried all their equipment with them for the entire route, everybody else making use of the Sherpa van. Our base was at Hathersage youth hostel for the first two nights (see photo below left).

On the first Saturday afternoon, Dave, Lorna, Brian, Julian, Zena, and Mary sampled the local countryside by walking from the village of Hope to Hathersage along the Derwent river valley. On arriving at the hostel, they met up with Kevin, Jackie, and Norman who had travelled up later in the day. Brian then cooked a superb beef casserole for everybody to set us all in high spirits for the challenge ahead.

The 9 NOG participants of the WPW were Brian Turner, Dave Fereday, Lorna Hall, Zena Cook, Mary MCGown, Kevin Holmes, Julian Rees, Jackie Roberts and Norman Roberts. The WPW is the fifth long distance footpath that the NOGs have completed in consecutive years.

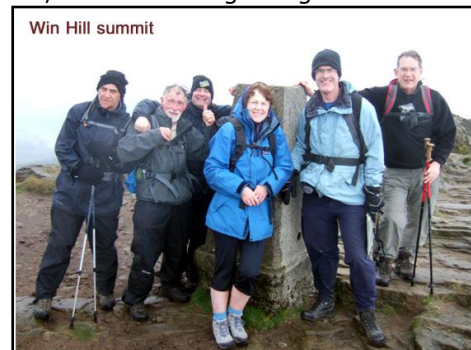
Day 1 Castleton to Hathersage – 13 miles



We started by catching the bus from Hathersage to Castleton along the Hope Valley. From Castleton youth hostel, the WPW route initially took us past all of the famous Castleton caverns, including Peak, Speedwell, Treak, and Blue John, before ascending the highest point on the WPW at Mam Tor (517 m). We then followed the popular ridge route separating the Hope Valley from the Vale of Edale, to the summits of Lose Hill and Win Hill, with the latter providing views over Ladybower reservoir. We descended into the village of Thornhill, before walking along the Derwent valley to Hathersage.

Day 2 Hathersage to Bakewell – 13 miles

Today involved a beautiful walk along the River Derwent, an ascent on to Froggatt Edge, a walk along Froggatt Edge, Curbar Edge, and Baslow Edge, followed by a stroll through Chatsworth Park. The final section involved a visit to the estate village of Edensor and steady climb through a deer park, before a final descent via the local golf course into Bakewell. We all stayed in B+B in Bakewell. Evening meal was taken at the Manners Inn, apart from those having fish and chips! The following day Norman's breakfast was



was the biggest that he has ever attempted to eat. Dave, Lorna, and Jackie were also all unable to finish their smoked salmon breakfasts.

Day 3 Bakewell to Youlgreave – 12 miles

The route initially followed the River Wye, before ascending the hills behind Haddon Hall. We then descended into the village of Rowsley, with its famous Peacock Hotel built in 1652. A steady climb followed to the village of Stanton in Peak, where we planned to stop for lunch, only to find the pub closed on Mondays and Tuesdays. The next section crossed Stanton Moor with views across to Matlock town, and a stop at the Bronze Age "Nine Ladies" stone circle. If you believe the local story, the Nine Ladies were village maidens who were turned to stone for dancing on the Sabbath.



Welcome refreshments followed at the Druid Inn in Birchover, prior to a final climb over Robin Hood's Stride (a collection of rock pinnacles) and descent into Youlgreave where the night was spent at the local youth hostel, formerly a co-op store (see photo right).

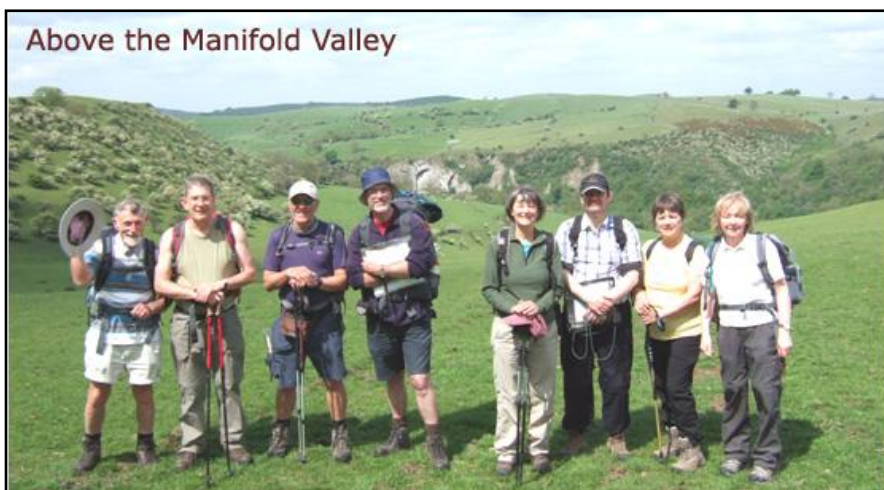
Day 4 Youlgreave to Alstonefield – 13 miles

A day of very mixed terrain with a damp walk up Gratton Dale, and two railway walks along sections of the High Peak Trail, and the Tissington Trail. We took the opportunity of deviating from the WPW at one point to take afternoon drinks at the Waterloo Inn in the village of Biggin.

On arrival at the hostel at Alstonefield, an excellent meal was prepared by Zena, Mary, and Jackie. Jackie left her handbag in the local village pub at the end of the evening and ran back to collect it later in her pyjamas!

Day 5 Alstonefield to Hartington – 15 miles

The toughest day so far, with lengthy sections along both the Dove and Manifold valleys. En route to Ilam Hall we visited Milldale, Dove Holes, Ilam Rock, Lovers Leap, and walked across the stepping stones in Dovedale. The plan was to have mid morning coffee in the National Trust café at Ilam Hall, but we didn't arrive there until 1.15pm, so an early lunch was taken. We then changed direction to walk up the Manifold Valley, passing Throwley Hall and Thor's Cave, before climbing out of the valley to the village of Wetton, where yet again the pub was closed during the afternoon. So a break was taken on the village green instead. Today was unusual in that around 4pm we were within 1 mile of Alstonefield where we started the day!



The final section to Hartington hostel took us through Narrowdale into Wolfscote Dale, with a short climb into the village. Before booking in at the hostel, an early meal was taken by Dave, Lorna, Kevin, Jackie, and Norman in the Charles Cotton Hotel, where time was taken in search of 'The Naked Lady' - a hidden portrayal within the mural painted just 3 months ago around the wall of the restaurant.

Froggatt Edge



Baslow church clock



Youlgreave hostel



Throwley Hall



Accommodation at Hartington hostel is somewhat special, Jackie and Norman being lucky enough to share 'The Roost', a luxurious en suite double bedroom, with TV and drinks facilities, and a downstairs self catering kitchen also with TV!



Day 6 Hartington to Buxton – 11 miles

A somewhat easier day, albeit we had to leave the WPW mid afternoon in order to walk 3 miles into Buxton for B+B accommodation at Compton House. Today we followed the River Dove in a northerly direction, visiting Pilsbury Castle Hill and the village of Crowdecote, before ascending to the village of Earl Sterndale. Here we stopped at the renowned Quiet Woman Inn, where Rev James ale was on sale. Dave tried a different brew, claiming that he can get Rev James 'down the road'! The inn sign depicts a headless woman.

The tale is that a former landlord had a nagging wife who was always showing him up in front of the customers. One day he was late home from the local market so she sent several customers to go out and look for him. That was the final straw. On his return the angry and humiliated landlord commissioned the inn sign. His explanation was – 'If I can't have a quiet woman inside my house, I'll have her outside instead.'

Above the village, we came across a gigantic series of quarries over 4 miles long with a railway running through them. We had to negotiate a route across the high land between the quarries, eventually crossing the main A515 road south of Horseshoe Dale.

A very pleasant stroll along Horseshoe Dale was followed by a break at the junction with Deep Dale. At this point we left the WPW and climbed out of the Dales to pick up the track to Buxton. A visit to the Opera House in Buxton with guided tour was the evening option for Brian, Zena, and Mary, whilst the rest of us followed Dave's lead to the nearest Wetherspoons at the Wye Bridge Hotel.

Day 7 Buxton to Castleton – 15 miles

Today proved for several NOGs to be both the most interesting and challenging day of the WPW. To avoid the 3 mile walk back to Horseshoe Dale, Brian, Zena, and Mary took a bus ride to Wye Dale, and they walked the Monsal Trail section to Ravenstor hostel, where Brian caught up with the state of hostel maintenance (and gardening)!

They then walked to Wormhill for the rendezvous point with the other NOGs. The other NOGs kept on walking rather than using public transport, and initially retraced their steps from Buxton back to Horseshoe Dale. From there it was quite tough walking through Deep Dale and over into Wye Dale. Coffee was taken at the bike hire stall at the start of the Monsal Trail.

To get to Wormhill, however, we followed the route of the River Wye through Chee Dale, rather than the easier Monsal Trail. Our route involved crossing two sets of stepping stones (see below), and a bit of scrambling around Chee Dale.



At one point we climbed up on to the Monsal Trail at the location of the two railway tunnels which we found to our surprise to be open. We descended back to the River Wye and continued to a point south of Wormhill where we left the valley and ascended to Wormhill Church where we met up with Brian and company.

The route from Wormhill to Castleton was more like the Dales Way, with the route following Peter Dale, Hay Dale, Dam Dale, and Cave Dale.

We planned a stop at the inn at Peak Forest during the afternoon, but guess what – it was closed! The last 3 miles involved a steady climb from Peak Forest up onto the Limestone Way path and then down into Castleton via Cave Dale and Peverill Castle. We had a quick celebratory drink in the village, before catching the bus back to Hathersage hostel.

Curry was the order of the day and we visited the local Balti, where the **2011 WPW awards** were presented – see next page!



The finish at Castleton

THE WHITE PEAK WALK 2011 AWARDS

These awards were presented on Sunday May 22nd at an evening meal in Hathersage at the end of the 86-90 mile walk (depending on which route was taken!)

AWARD NAME	PRESENTED FOR	PRESENTED TO
The NOGs Premier Award	Completing the full distance on the White Peak Way	Dave Fereday, Julian Rees, Kevin Holmes, Brian Turner, Jackie Roberts, Norman Roberts
The NOGs Secondary Award	Almost completing the full distance on the White Peak Way	Lorna Hall, Zena Cook, Mary Mcgown
The Newport Indoor Market Confectionery Award	Improved sales of sweets	Kevin Holmes
The Gwent Beef Farmers Award	Selling rotten beef to an unsuspecting NOG	Kevin Holmes
The Derbyshire Botanists Award	Protection of the bluebell population	Kevin Holmes
The OSMR (Ordnance Survey Mapping Regimental) Award	Keeping us on the right track (some of the time)	Norman Roberts
The White Peak Way 3 Virgins Award	Completing (or nearly completing) a long distance footpath for the 1st time with the NOGs	Lorna Hall, Mary Mcgown, Kevin Holmes
The Arctic/Antarctic 2011 special explorer award	Being poles apart in Chatsworth Park	Zena Cook, Dave Fereday
The O2 stellar award	Making at least 5 phone calls and sending at least 10 texts every day	Julian Rees,
The Peak District National Health Service Nursing Award	Continuous first aid support	Jackie Roberts
The Ibuprofen/Paracetamol Pain Killing Award	Putting his back into it	Kevin Holmes
The Peak District Tourist Accommodation Award	Single Room Occupancy	Brian Turner
The Eurovision 2011 Song Contest and Local Fisheries Award	The song 'Save All Your Kippers For Me'	Zena Cook
The Microsoft Windows Award	The longest time spent on the internet	Mary Mcgown
The Up and Under Outdoor Equipment Award	Nearly losing his hat and map, and tripping over, all in the space of 5 minutes	Dave Fereday
The Karimor Excellence Award	Back breaking endeavours in personal luggage transportation	Jackie Roberts, Kevin Holmes, Norman Roberts
The White Peak Way 'Add An Extension' Award	Julian Rees Making the group walk an extra 3 miles each way into/out of Buxton	Brian Turner
The Derbyshire Dales 2011 Talent Spotting Competition Award	Talent Spotting (he's still trying!)	Julian Rees
The Peaks Lost Property Annual Award	Leaving a handbag in the pub at Alstonefield	Jackie Roberts
The J D Wetherspoons Award	Unparalleled improvement in annual sales	Dave Fereday, Lorna Hall
The 'Drop A Dead Donkey' Award	Confectionery generosity to both NOGs and donkeys	Kevin Holmes
The NOGs Delayed Start Award	10 minute warning, 5 minute warning, 2 minute warning, 1 minute warning, Time to go - 'Oh can I go to the toilet please before we leave?'	Lorna Hall